

1 SCOPING AND INFORMATIONAL MEETING - 16-327

2 Park Rapids - August 30, 2016 - 6:00 p.m.

3 BEFORE THE MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

4 AND DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

5  
6 In the Matter of the Application of Minnkota Power  
7 Cooperative, Inc. for a Route Permit for the MPL-Laporte  
8 115 kV Transmission Line Project in Clearwater and  
9 Hubbard Counties, Minnesota.

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12 MPUC DOCKET NO. ET-6/TL-16-327

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16 Park Rapids Public Library  
17 210 1st Street SW  
18 Park Rapids, MN

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21 August 30, 2016

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25 COURT REPORTER: Janet Shaddix Elling, RPR

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First off, my name is Kevin George. I'm with the Public Utilities Commission. My title is public advisor. Basically my job is to help liaison with the public to make sure that, you know, questions about the process are answered. If you have questions about the overall approval for specific permits, that sort of thing, you can ask questions of me. Otherwise, the Department, you met Bill on the way in, I imagine, and we have the Department here and the Company and they will all be able to answer different questions for you.

So tonight's meeting basically is to explain what the Commission does, what the Commission's review process is, to talk about some information about the proposed project. The Department is going to gather information for the environmental review. Bill will talk a little bit more about that later. And then if you have any general questions about the process or the project, I mean, feel free to ask and we'll answer them as best we can.

So the Public Utilities Commission, it's

1 a state agency. It's made up of five commissioners,  
2 50 staff, it's kind of a holdover from the  
3 Environmental Quality Board in the past. They have  
4 kind of a wide range of scope. So we do  
5 certificates of need for energy projects, and then  
6 siting and routing for things like power plants,  
7 pipelines, transmission lines, which is why we're  
8 here tonight. We also do some work with local  
9 in-state long-distance telephone companies but  
10 that's kind of on its way out. And then  
11 investor-owned electricity and natural gas  
12 companies, so like Xcel, Minnesota Power, that sort  
13 of thing.

14 So the reason we're here tonight is a  
15 high voltage transmission line. Just a little bit  
16 of background on that. A high voltage transmission  
17 line has to operate at 100 kilovolts or more. The  
18 proposed project is at 115 kVs. And it has to be  
19 greater than 1,500 feet in length and I think the  
20 project is proposed at 9.4 miles. So it requires a  
21 route permit through the Public Utilities  
22 Commission, so eventually the project will move  
23 before the five commissioners and they will decide  
24 whether or not to approve the route for the  
25 transmission line.

So who's here? The Applicant is here, that's Minnkota Power. They're going to be presenting next, you'll get some more information from them. The EERA, which is the Environmental Review and Analysis with the Department of Commerce, you met Bill on the way in again. And they're going to be doing the environmental review and Bill will talk more about that shortly.

And then I'm here as the public advisor.

1 Again, my role is to help the public participate in  
2 the process, kind of facilitate that process, answer  
3 questions about the permitting process if you have  
4 them.

5 One note is that the Commission staff  
6 doesn't give legal advice. We do have lawyers on  
7 staff and that sort of thing, but we don't give  
8 legal advice and we're not like an advocating  
9 organization. The Attorney General's Office does  
10 some of that, but the Commission itself isn't an  
11 advocating party, it's just the permitting and  
12 analysis side.

13 So some of the decision considerations  
14 that the commissioners look at, that's part of the  
15 reason that you folks are here tonight, is to help  
16 build the record that they're going to be making the  
17 decisions on. You know, you can see it up here.  
18 Human settlement basically is, you know, just you're  
19 going to have to displace any farmland or houses,  
20 you know, or what's going to happen with noise, how  
21 the landscape looks. If there's public services or  
22 recreational facilities or land that are impacted,  
23 you know, that's the stuff that's taken into  
24 consideration. Any time that public health or  
25 safety comes up, obviously any energy project is

1 going to have some measure of public health or  
2 safety considerations to take into account. The  
3 economics, again, that's where if you're displacing  
4 agricultural land, forestry, or land that's  
5 typically looked at for tourism, mining, that sort  
6 of thing. Archaeological or historical sites,  
7 obviously, you know, we want to be sensitive to  
8 impacting those kind of areas. And the natural  
9 environment, air, water, plants, wildlife. If there  
10 are significant impacts on endangered species or any  
11 threatened species, anything like that, that's  
12 something that the Commission does take into  
13 consideration.

14 And then kind of more broadly, the  
15 Commission, you know, always want to maximize the  
16 efficiency of a project to make sure that, you know,  
17 a line is going to be going the most efficient route  
18 possible, or that, you know, a new plant, a new  
19 power plant is going to be operating as efficient as  
20 possible, that sort of thing. That if there's going  
21 to be future expansion you want to have enough room  
22 for it if you're siting it in a specific way. Or if  
23 there are existing lines or other facilities that  
24 you can use existing right-of-way on, that's  
25 obviously something that the Commission would like

1 to see. Use of natural boundaries, you know, if  
2 there are field boundaries, water lines, you know,  
3 something that make it easy to kind of delineate  
4 where a route would go. And then just, again,  
5 broadly, electrical system reliability, you know,  
6 they want to make sure that the system can operate  
7 as efficiently and effectively as possible. And  
8 then lastly, cost, both to operate and maintain the  
9 facility.

10 So the permitting process -- it's a  
11 little bit small -- but we are here at the public  
12 information and scoping meeting so it's kind of the  
13 second step. The application was accepted in July.  
14 We're having the meeting now. So what happens next  
15 is the Department of Commerce is going to do their  
16 environmental assessment and scoping decision and  
17 then eventually they're going to do the  
18 environmental assessment, which is where we'll come  
19 back in and then we're going to have a public  
20 hearing which should be up in this neighborhood  
21 again. That's another opportunity for the public to  
22 come and comment.

23 The public hearing is actually done with  
24 an Administrative Law Judge who comes in and takes  
25 all the factors that any members of the public want



1 to have or any other parties. Sometimes there are  
2 other third-party groups that have input on various  
3 projects or ideas. And then what the Administrative  
4 Law Judge does is he reviews the facts and the  
5 testimony from the hearing and comes out with a  
6 report. In this case a summary, where it makes  
7 recommendations for decisions and that sort of  
8 thing. And then it comes back finally to the Public  
9 Utilities Commission in front of the commissioners  
10 where a final decision is made.

11 So an estimated timeline for all of that.  
12 Again, I apologize for the size. It is all on the  
13 table in a more readable font. But, again, we are  
14 here today with the public information and scoping  
15 hearing. An important notice is that the comment  
16 period closes, so obviously anything you say tonight  
17 is going to be taken into account on the record, but  
18 you can also submit comments up until 4:30 p.m. on  
19 September 13th. So if you walk out tonight and you  
20 go, oh, shoot, I should have said something, you're  
21 more than welcome to write in comments for the next  
22 couple of weeks.

23 So then this is just an estimated  
24 timeline. The environmental assessment will  
25 probably be out in October -- or the scoping

1 decision out in October. The environmental  
2 assessment published around January of the new year.  
3 A public hearing will happen shortly thereafter.  
4 And then we'll have the Administrative Law Judge  
5 report about a month after the public hearing, and  
6 then it should come back for the Commission for a  
7 decision about a month after the report. So without  
8 any delays or unexpected things, this should come to  
9 a conclusion in March of next year.

10 Citizen background information on sending  
11 comments into the Commission, or to the Department.  
12 You want to include the docket number, which is  
13 16-327. You'll see in the notice, which is this  
14 document here that's on the table, it talks about  
15 the project description, it has the Department's map  
16 on the back.

17 There are some topics or guidelines for  
18 public comment in there just to talk about, you  
19 know, the things that are most directly looked at  
20 for the environmental review. Things, again, like  
21 the human settlement, environmental impacts, are  
22 there specific ways that you would suggest to avoid  
23 any problems that you foresee, alternative routes or  
24 route segments, that sort of thing.

25 Verbal and written comments carry the

1 same weight. So anything you say tonight, you don't  
2 have to write it in because we'll have that on the  
3 record. And those comments carry the same weight.

4 And then an important notice, that the  
5 Commission's decision is based on only what's in the  
6 record. So if there's something that you say, you  
7 know, to us as we're walking out, that doesn't  
8 necessarily make it into the record, you're going to  
9 want to submit something formally so that it gets  
10 into the record and the Commission makes their  
11 decision on that.

12 And one note here that comments are  
13 public information. So, you know, when you submit  
14 it, you have your name on it, that sort of thing,  
15 that does get published in accordance with the Data  
16 Practices Act. And, again, the comments must be  
17 received by September 13th at 4:30.

18 For more information there are a variety  
19 of different ways. You can search eDockets. And  
20 there is, again, in the notice, under How to Learn  
21 More, it'll show you how to get into the eDocket  
22 system. And then you can also subscribe to the  
23 project mailing list. These cards are out on the  
24 table up there in front. If you fill those out,  
25 I'll take them back, you'll get added to the project

1 mailing list, and then any project milestones or  
2 public participation opportunities will get sent  
3 your way so you're made aware of them. Another way  
4 is to subscribe to the docket. Again, the  
5 instructions for that are in the How to Learn More  
6 portion of the notice. And any time a new document  
7 is put in the record, you'll get a notification  
8 about it. Sometimes there are a significant number  
9 of documents in those dockets so you may get a large  
10 number of emails, but that way you'll have access to  
11 everything that there is in the docket.

12 So just quickly going over. So eDockets,  
13 you just go to the Public Utilities Commission  
14 website, [mn.gov/puc](http://mn.gov/puc). You select Search eDockets,  
15 it's just a little button down in the middle of the  
16 screen. And then you enter the year, which is 16,  
17 and the docket number is 327, and hit search and  
18 it's going to pull up everything in the docket for  
19 you.

20 For the project mailing list, if you  
21 don't fill out a card tonight and later decide that  
22 you do want to get on that project mailing list you  
23 can contact the docketing department at the Public  
24 Utilities Commission in a variety of ways. You can  
25 send them an email, all you have to do is send in

1 the docket number and say you want to be added to  
2 the project list, they'll get you added, or you can  
3 call either of the numbers there and they'll say the  
4 same thing, they'll get you on the list.

5 And then for subscribing, the same  
6 website, go to the Commission website, Subscribe to  
7 a Docket, which is another button, a fairly  
8 significant button right on the screen there. Type  
9 in your email address, select a docket number, which  
10 is 16-327 again, and select to add to the list and  
11 you'll be good to go.

12 And then as far as contacts at the Public  
13 Utilities Commission. My contact information is in  
14 the PowerPoint, as is Cezar's, our planner for this  
15 facility permit. And you're welcome to question --  
16 or send us questions any time about the permitting  
17 process, where we are, anything, we'll be more than  
18 happy to answer it.

19 So that's it on my end. I think as far  
20 as questions go, we'll probably do questions at the  
21 end 'cause there are probably things that'll be  
22 answered by the other presentations if you have  
23 questions right now.

24 So next we're going to bring up Minnkota  
25 to do their portion. And I don't know who's

1 speaking first.

2 MR. JOHN GRAVES: Good evening. My name  
3 is John Graves. I'm the environmental manager with  
4 Minnkota Power Cooperative. And on behalf of  
5 Minnkota Power I'd like to thank you for attending  
6 this evening.

7 My comments are somewhat general in  
8 nature. The project manager will go into more  
9 details concerning specifics of the route or  
10 construction of the line, et cetera.

11 When we started this project we looked at  
12 a variety of potential routes. We looked at five  
13 potential routes, and we looked at various aspects  
14 and ranked those aspects in the routes and compared  
15 against each other. And we also discussed routes  
16 with the Minnesota DNR and the Minnesota Department  
17 of Transportation. And that's how we arrived and  
18 selected the route that we are making the  
19 application for this evening.

20 More detail is given on the route in the  
21 permit application on those routes. So as Kevin had  
22 indicated, that is available on the eDockets. If  
23 you haven't had a chance to read the permit  
24 application, I encourage you to do so. There's a  
25 lot of information in there concerning the various

1 routes and why we chose the route that we did for  
2 this particular project.

3 One of the things that we looked at that  
4 is very important is really what is the overall  
5 impact. And as Kevin had stated here earlier, one  
6 of the things we look at is making use of adjoining  
7 or existing right-of-ways. The route that we have  
8 chosen makes use and overlaps a great many existing  
9 right-of-ways, whether they're distribution line or  
10 for a road. So that's very important because it  
11 minimizes the impact on the land. It means less  
12 tree clearing, for instance. And so that's a very  
13 positive attribute.

14 Now, I've been in this business a long  
15 time and I'm going to tell you that there is no  
16 perfect route. There just isn't. Perfect, you  
17 know, is somewhat in the eye of the beholder, what  
18 might be the perfect route for you may not be the  
19 perfect route for somebody else. So, but we've  
20 endeavored to make the comparisons amongst the  
21 routes, we looked at a lot of routes, and we're  
22 somewhat constrained, obviously, on where we can go.  
23 There's wetlands that constrain us. A large  
24 constraint to us is a Minnesota biological sensitive  
25 area that is adjacent to an existing route that

1           we've applied for. So that is also a big  
2           constraint.

3                       So we think we've got a good route. I'm  
4           not going to say it's perfect, like I said, but it  
5           is a good route. We think it meets the concerns of  
6           the Commission and we hope it addresses your  
7           concerns. And I hope that if you read the permit  
8           application that it will address some of your  
9           concerns as well.

10                      And with that, I'd like to introduce Jay  
11           Bushy, who is the project manager, who will get into  
12           more of the project details.

13                      MR. JAY BUSHY: Thanks, John.

14                      Good evening everyone. My name is Jay  
15           Bushy, I'm the project manager for Minnkota on our  
16           MPL-Laporte 115 kilovolt line project.

17                      Tonight I'm going to talk about our need,  
18           the route, our right-of-way, our transmission line  
19           structures, our construction process, and our  
20           project coordinators.

21                      Let's talk about our -- go to the next  
22           slide -- our need. Basically, what we're doing with  
23           our project is we're providing electrical service to  
24           Minnesota Pipe Line's Laporte pumping station, which  
25           is located down in this -- down off of County Road



1        95 in Hubbard County. We are constructing 9.4 miles  
2        of line and building a substation to support their  
3        pumping station.

4                Let's get into the route. Basically, we  
5        submitted a route to the PUC and the Department of  
6        Commerce. This route is an area that's, generally  
7        speaking, 100 to 300 feet wide, with some additional  
8        areas up on the north end here down by 190th Street  
9        and then down where we connect to Minnesota Pipe  
10       Line's pumping station. This allows us to place our  
11       transmission structures in this area.

12               And I'll talk about our proposed  
13       centerline and how we transverse this whole 9.4  
14       miles now. Basically, we tie into an existing 115  
15       kilovolt line up on the north end here with the  
16       structure. We basically run west, and this long  
17       road here is 281st Street. This is the divider  
18       between Hubbard and Clearwater County. So half the  
19       project is in Clearwater County, half is in Hubbard.  
20       Four miles in length along 281st Street, generally  
21       speaking our alignment is on the east side of the  
22       road.

23               We follow distribution line. Basically  
24       our poles will be constructed approximately where  
25       the existing distribution line is along the first --

1           oop, excuse me. The first two miles, the  
2           distribution line that exists there will be buried  
3           as part of the project.

4                       Then we continue along the east side of  
5           281st Street and then we pick up distribution line  
6           as we get south of 180th Street. And then as we get  
7           closer to Highway 200, we turn, about a half mile  
8           north we turn to the east and go off of existing  
9           right-of-way to avoid the residents down here in the  
10          corner and another residence here.

11                      So we headed east and southeast and then  
12          basically we pick up, we're along the north side of  
13          Highway 200 for about three-quarters of a mile. And  
14          where we jump back out onto Highway 200, we're about  
15          six-tenths of a mile east of 281st Street. Then we  
16          come down, this east-west road here is 400th  
17          Avenue -- or 400th Street. Sorry, excuse me. We  
18          basically start out, we pick up distribution line  
19          and we follow distribution line on the north side of  
20          400th Street.

21                      We cross LaSalle Creek, which is the  
22          creek right here, and we keep heading along the  
23          north side of 400th to just past 105th Avenue. And  
24          then we jump along the south side of 400th all the  
25          way to 115th Avenue, which is this north-south road.

Then as we come here, this east-west road is County Road 95, we turn and go along the north side of County Road 95, where we pick up existing distribution line and we'd be placing our poles adjacent to where the existing poles are now and that existing distribution line will get buried.

MR. JOHN GRAVES: Jay, would you point out the fact that there is one area on the north-south route where we are not on the east side of the road?

MR. JAY BUSHY: Yeah, it's hard to see on

1           this small scale, but right down here, this is  
2           probably about a quarter mile to a half mile south  
3           of 180th Street. There's an existing residence.  
4           The distribution line crosses the road to avoid the  
5           residence, we will follow that alignment of the  
6           distribution line.

7                       MR. MICHAEL KATZENMEYER: Say that again.  
8           You're coming south -- how far north of Highway 200  
9           are you at that point?

10                      MR. JAY BUSHY: We're approximately, I  
11           would say, from Highway 200, we're probably about  
12           three-quarters of a mile.

13                      MR. MICHAEL KATZENMEYER: Okay.

14                      MR. JAY BUSHY: Don't quote me on it.  
15           That's just generally looking at it. I don't have  
16           the exact figures, we could provide that  
17           information.

18                      MR. MICHAEL KATZENMEYER: Okay. So all  
19           the way from the north line you're coming south on  
20           the east side of the road?

21                      MR. JAY BUSHY: Yeah, east side of the  
22           road.

23                      MR. MICHAEL KATZENMEYER: Then you jump  
24           to the west side of the road for how far?

25                      MR. JAY BUSHY: Just a couple of

1 structures, which I'll talk about distances between  
2 the structures, and then we jump back on the east  
3 side of the road.

4 MR. MICHAEL KATZENMEYER: All right.

5 MR. JAY BUSHY: Our right-of-way.  
6 Basically, if I jump back to this slide, basically  
7 the yellow area is our route. The red is our  
8 centerline. This is a route. Generally speaking,  
9 we will acquire easements from landowners. Our  
10 right-of-way is determined, typically on a 115 line  
11 we have right-of-way of 100 feet, that's 50 feet on  
12 either side of the pole. Generally speaking, for a  
13 majority, probably 90 percent of this route, our  
14 right-of-way width is 100.

15 There is a section, as John spoke about,  
16 this Minnesota biologically sensitive area, which is  
17 basically from 281st Street to 105th Street in  
18 Hubbard County. This whole area in here is this  
19 biologically sensitive area. So where we transverse  
20 this biologically sensitive area, we were shrinking  
21 our right-of-way to 80 feet, or 40 feet on either  
22 side of our centerline.

23 So let's talk about our transmission  
24 structures. Our transmission structures, if you can  
25 see on the wall there, there's three types of

1 transmission structures we're going to propose for  
2 this project. Typically, the majority of our poles  
3 are going to be a single-pole structure. The two-  
4 and three-pole structures, as we call those, those  
5 will be for larger spans. But typically our  
6 structures are going to be anywhere from 65 to 110  
7 feet above the ground. It just depends on elevation  
8 and where the poles are placed. We are not that far  
9 into the design process to determine those heights  
10 and where the lines are going to be between the  
11 ground and the line, we're not at that point yet.

12 So like I said, where there's  
13 distribution line, we will replace the distribution  
14 line with our line. The distribution line will be  
15 buried by Clearwater-Polk, our member co-op. Our  
16 typical single-pole structures, they'll be placed  
17 anywhere between 300 and 350 feet apart. And then  
18 our other two larger pole structures, the two-pole  
19 structure and the three-pole structure on the wall  
20 there, the TH-115 and the TH-115-7, those will be  
21 placed where we're going to have to cross wetlands.  
22 And right now we only have about three crossings of  
23 the wetlands on this road right now. And typically  
24 they'll be placed in spans, wetland spans bigger  
25 than 350 feet. Again, here is a picture of a

1        typical 115 single-pole line. This is a typical  
2        two-pole structure. And this is a side view of a  
3        three-pole structure.

4                Generally, our construction process. As  
5        the project -- after we get our route permit, we'll  
6        get into the construction process. Basically, what  
7        we will do once we get in the construction process,  
8        the surveyors will come out, they'll stake the  
9        clearing widths and right-of-way and easement  
10       centerlines. Then we'll start tree clearing. Tree  
11       clearing will start, and then we'll get into tree  
12       clearing away and then a transmission line  
13       contractor will come in, deliver poles, and start  
14       placing poles. Then after they start placing poles  
15       they'll string wire and basically connect to our  
16       substation. And basically they'll come back in and  
17       restore the site.

18               That pretty much sums up the end of my  
19        presentation. But, again, our project contacts are  
20        John Graves, our environmental manager, Brian  
21        Hoffart, our right-of-way and property manager, and  
22        myself, Jay Bushy, I'm the project manager.

23               So I'll turn it over to Bill now for his  
24        part of the presentation.

25               MR. BILL STORM: Good evening. Bill

1           Storm, Department of Commerce. I talked to some of  
2           you as you came in.

3                     I think we have more regulatory people  
4           here and company people than we do actual citizens.  
5           What have we got for citizens? Okay. I'm going to  
6           tailor it towards you guys, my talk.

7                     As I said when you were coming in, the  
8           Public Utilities Commission are the decision-makers  
9           on these dockets. And six months from now, maybe  
10          nine, depending on how everything goes, that  
11          Commission will make three decisions. One, they'll  
12          determine that the environmental assessment done is  
13          adequate and the record is adequate enough for them  
14          to make a decision. And then they'll either grant  
15          or deny the Applicant a route permit. And if they  
16          do grant it, then they will specify the route and  
17          any conditions on that route. And I can go over  
18          some of that a little bit later.

19                    My role, as I said, is to do the  
20          environmental review. That's the Department of  
21          Commerce's role in this thing.

22                    This is basically a schematic of the  
23          process. Similar to what Kevin showed you, you can  
24          see where we're at, we're at the public meeting.  
25          Once the public meeting is over, there's a 10-day



1 comment period. Your scoping comments for the  
2 environmental assessment, that is any concerns,  
3 issues you want to make sure I capture in an  
4 environmental report, or any local knowledge you may  
5 have. That's a big part of why I come out and do  
6 these, is you may have local knowledge that I don't  
7 have or the DNR doesn't have on one of their GIS  
8 shapefiles, you may know something. You may go,  
9 hey, Bill, there's a deer wintering area there. You  
10 may go, hey, Bill, there's some native, natural  
11 native areas, or some rare plant or whatever it is,  
12 a cemetery, whatever the local issue may be.

13 One of the purposes for me being here  
14 tonight is to get you to give me that information.  
15 So we'll have the meeting tonight, there's a 10-day  
16 comment period for you to get me those comments, and  
17 once that comment period ends, I will look at all  
18 the comments I got, I will look at any suggested  
19 alternative routes that you want me to look at, and  
20 I will make a recommendation to my commissioner on  
21 what should be the scope of the environmental  
22 report.

23 And when you think about the term scope,  
24 think about a table of contents. And I'll go over  
25 that a little bit later. But you can see where

1 Kevin went over the process, that's just another  
2 schematic of it.

3 The environmental review under the  
4 alternative process. There are two processes that  
5 applicants can use, a full process and an  
6 alternative process. The alternative process is for  
7 the smaller lines, the shorter projects, which this  
8 qualifies for and which the Applicant has submitted  
9 their application under.

10 Under the alternative review process we  
11 have public scoping meetings and a public comment  
12 period. We have a scoping decision, which  
13 memorializes what the environmental assessment will  
14 cover. And then we have the environmental  
15 assessment.

16 And the environmental assessment, the  
17 purpose of the scoping meeting, as I said, was to  
18 provide you information about the project, provide  
19 you information about the process, but also to get  
20 information from you. What features, what natural  
21 features, what man-made features are you concerned  
22 about that this route might impact, or what  
23 alternatives would you like me to consider  
24 evaluating that minimize or mitigate or avoid a  
25 situation that you're aware of, a local situation

1           that you're aware of.

2                       The scoping decision that comes out has  
3           to meet certain regulatory thresholds. It has to  
4           identify any alternative routes. So if you give me  
5           an alternative route tonight to consider and I look  
6           at your reasoning and I do a cursory desktop review  
7           of it, and I think, okay, yeah, this warrants  
8           further investigation, I'll include it in the scope.  
9           So the scope must include any routes I'm going to  
10          consider. It must also identify specific potential  
11          impacts that I'm going to address, so all the areas  
12          that I'm going to address, and I'll give more detail  
13          about that a little later.

14                     The scoping decision must tell you,  
15          here's when I think I'll have the environmental  
16          assessment out the door, and then any other matters  
17          that the Commission may decide need to be covered.  
18          So that's the scoping decision. That's what  
19          memorializes the direction I'm taking in the  
20          environmental review.

21                     The environmental assessment itself is  
22          basically a written document that describes the  
23          human and environmental impacts of a transmission  
24          line and any alternatives that get approved for  
25          review. And the methods to mitigate them. How can

1           they be avoided, how can they be mitigated, how can  
2           they be minimized, those impacts.

3                       Basically, this is just the same stuff  
4           and the same list of what the EA should have in rule  
5           speak. So just for your reference, you can check  
6           back on that. Those are the items that my  
7           environmental assessment must cover.

8                       Okay. As I said, what we're here to do  
9           tonight is, one, is to introduce the project to you,  
10          give you an opportunity to meet the Applicant, give  
11          you an opportunity, and you will have that after I'm  
12          done speaking, an opportunity to ask questions,  
13          detailed questions of them, and to comment on the  
14          record, but also to identify local issues of  
15          concern.

16                      And what I do ahead of these meetings is  
17          I put out a document that's called a draft scoping  
18          document. It's on the table here, I encourage you  
19          to grab one. The first couple pages basically just  
20          tell you about the process, the regulatory process.  
21          A little bit about the project. But then when you  
22          get to Section 5 of it, it's basically the scope.  
23          This is -- and what this is, I look at it as this is  
24          a blank Christmas tree. This is what I think the  
25          environmental assessment should cover in broad

1 areas. Water, air, vegetation, wildlife. These are  
2 broad categories that I put on here.

3 And what I'm asking for in these scoping  
4 meetings, I'm asking for any local unit of  
5 government, any local citizens, any local snowmobile  
6 clubs, if you're aware of a trail that I might not  
7 be aware of, nature groups, any local knowledge,  
8 bring that forth to me and help hang ornaments onto  
9 this tree. Help me fill in the details. An example  
10 is, you can see if you go to this document, and you  
11 can see, if you look in the table of contents, what  
12 I think the scope will be in these broad categories,  
13 you can see one of the categories is the rare and  
14 unique natural resources.

15 Okay. So what I'm saying in this  
16 document is I'm going to look, I'll do the GIS  
17 shapefile searches, I'll check with the DNR, I'll  
18 check with the Fish and Wildlife Service, and see  
19 what are the rare and endangered and unique  
20 resources that are in the vicinity of this project.  
21 And I'll speak to the potential impact this project  
22 may have on them and any way to avoid, mitigate, or  
23 minimize those impacts.

24 Your opportunity here is you may know  
25 that, you know, Bill, I hike in this area a lot and

1 I'm familiar with that transmission line, and  
2 there's this, you know, you might be a plant person,  
3 I know this is buttercup that's rare and unique, and  
4 the only place I see it growing is right where  
5 they're going, so I just want to make you aware,  
6 Bill, that I think this is here so you should  
7 incorporate this in your scope so that when you  
8 write your document you do the literary search and  
9 the agency search and tell me, fill that in. You  
10 know, is that going to be a problem, is it there, is  
11 it documented, is there a way to mitigate it or  
12 avoid it. So that's the type of issues. And  
13 there's all kinds of issues. Air, water, wildlife.  
14 So if you have any local knowledge or any concerns  
15 and you want to make sure I cover it, put that in  
16 your comments to me, you know, during these 10 days.

17 The other category outside of issues and  
18 concerns is the routes. The rules, the law and the  
19 rule allows for the public in these processes to put  
20 forth an alternative route or an alternative route  
21 segment. We usually see these requests come in in  
22 what we call alternative route segments. And what  
23 that basically means is, Bill, I'm not drawing you a  
24 whole new 9-mile route, I'm drawing you just a  
25 segment because my concern is here, there's an old

1 cemetery that nobody knows about that's here and the  
2 route is going over it, Bill, so I want you to study  
3 this route that goes around it. That's the type of  
4 alternatives that we're looking for, alternatives  
5 that come from local knowledge.

6 I'm going to go through a list of them,  
7 or a list of examples that I've experienced in doing  
8 this for 15, 20 years. The one thing I want to  
9 stress is these projects often cross public  
10 property -- private property, and nobody likes  
11 infrastructure crossing their property. It's a  
12 burden that we ask as a society for other members of  
13 society to carry.

14 If you have a line that's crossing your  
15 property and, of course, you don't like that, but  
16 what I'm looking for when somebody brings me an  
17 alternative route or alternative route segment is  
18 you can't just have the position of I don't want it  
19 to cross my private property, have it cross Joe's  
20 private property. That's pretty low, I weight that  
21 pretty low when I evaluate whether I carry something  
22 forward to study. But now if you have a piece of  
23 property that this route is crossing, but you know  
24 across the road there is acres and acres and miles  
25 and miles of tax forfeited public land, you may have

1 the thought, and it's a valid thought, one that's  
2 been used before, is, well, if this is a public  
3 infrastructure project, we should try and put it on  
4 public property as much as possible. Bill, here's a  
5 route that takes it away from the private property,  
6 which happens to be mine, and goes down the public  
7 property. That to me is a valid hook, that to me is  
8 a valid motivation for looking at something.

9 So let me just run you through some and  
10 when we're done you can ask me and pick my brain  
11 about what I think, alternatives that basically just  
12 goes over.

13 Here we have an alternative. It doesn't  
14 show up very well. But this was in Tower to  
15 Embarrass. A line that's running Tower to  
16 Embarrass. The utility company wanted to run it  
17 down, I think it was 135, which runs down through  
18 Tower and Embarrass there. I think that's Tower,  
19 Embarrass down there. And this section here,  
20 they're running -- which is good, which we encourage  
21 utilities to do, they're running along 135, I think  
22 it was, Highway 135, and that's fine. The issue was  
23 in this area, imagine, because they get so much snow  
24 or whatever, the houses aren't way far back from the  
25 road. You know, they're set back 100 feet, 200 feet



1 from the road. And the group of people here that  
2 were along this road really didn't want this  
3 transmission line coming down the road and taking  
4 their wind breaks out that help them in the snow,  
5 and it's also close to them because they're not that  
6 far back. And this group came forth and said, well,  
7 Bill, there's all this tax forfeited property over  
8 here, about two miles to the east. Is there a way  
9 that you can evaluate that coming down and coming  
10 down to avoid running in front of all these homes  
11 here along the road. And the way they presented it  
12 to me was it's a public infrastructure project, this  
13 has it crossing private land, we think there's an  
14 alternative where a public infrastructure project  
15 can cross public land. And they put that forth.  
16 When I looked at their argument and their reasoning  
17 it made sense to me, this does warrant further  
18 review.

19 So I did my environmental review, I did  
20 an environmental assessment of the proposal, and  
21 also of two alternatives that went around that  
22 private land. And when it was all done and said,  
23 the Commission, it went through a public hearing  
24 after the EA came out, the environmental document  
25 came out, and it was all done and the Commission

1       agreed and they permitted this alternative route  
2       segment. So that's one case where somebody put  
3       something forward, had a rationale and it carried  
4       forward.

5               Here's another one. This is down in  
6       Shakopee, I believe. This was a rebuild. There was  
7       an existing transmission line, a small one, a 69 kV,  
8       a small line that ran this way through Shakopee.  
9       There was a property here that was a historic  
10      property, where this transmission line already went  
11      in front of it, but the citizens were concerned that  
12      this bigger line, it was a 115, it was going to be  
13      like what's going in here, would come across and  
14      they thought the impact would be too high on that  
15      historic property. So they asked me, Bill, would  
16      you evaluate an alternative that takes it on the  
17      other side of the street and also would you evaluate  
18      an alternative route segment that takes it out of  
19      the route down and follows this abandoned railroad  
20      corridor up and connects. That made sense to me. I  
21      thought that was a valid concern. So I included  
22      that in the scope. Since it was included in the  
23      scope, it got dealt with in my environmental report  
24      and I did analyze it.

25             In this case, after the hearing, when it

1        came in front of the Commission, the Commission did  
2        not think that that impact rose to a level and they  
3        permitted the line the way the utility wanted it  
4        permitted.

5                    Another example. This is private versus  
6        corporate land. Here we had a new transmission line  
7        going in, a 115 again, same as here. And the  
8        Applicant proposed to bring it up here and then cut  
9        across the south part of this road here. Where was  
10       this at? I do so many of these sometimes it's hard  
11       to remember where this was. Anyway, these are  
12       private landowners here. Big tracks of land,  
13       because it's up north and they're close to the road,  
14       but across the street, or across the road was all  
15       corporate land, Blandin Paper, or one of the large  
16       paper companies, and somebody brought forth the  
17       ideas. Well, look, why don't you take this  
18       transmission line, which is again for public  
19       purpose, and move it to the corporate land, saying  
20       it's better to site on corporate tracks of land than  
21       private individual tracks of land. That made sense  
22       to me. I included it in my scope. Since it was  
23       included in my scope it was evaluated and went to  
24       the public hearing. And once it got before the  
25       Commission, the Commission agreed with this

1 alternative and this alternative was selected for  
2 the route.

3 Another example. This is another 115  
4 line coming up a road. In this case there was a  
5 family that had a tragic event that occurred in  
6 their home and they had a memorial built for their  
7 family member here on this site here. Well, this  
8 rebuilt of the transmission line would come up, and  
9 they were afraid that the expanded right-of-way that  
10 was required would impact this memorial. That made  
11 sense to me to evaluate it, at least let's take a  
12 look at it, and we did. And when we evaluated it  
13 and when we did all the surveying and the evaluating  
14 work, the distance between the memorial and the new  
15 transmission right-of-way we felt was -- I felt, or  
16 the Commission felt was not impactful of that  
17 memorial and they rejected this alternative.

18 I think this is the last one. Sorry  
19 about this, guys. Here we have a transmission line  
20 that was a 69, small transmission line. And they  
21 were converting it to a 115 so they were beefing it  
22 up a little bit. But in the interim, when this  
23 69 kV line was built 'til the time that this new  
24 line was proposed, the county highway, which used to  
25 dip down here, was moved. And the landowners here

1        said, well, why don't you just move the transmission  
2        line up to the county road that's been moved north  
3        now instead of having it come across our property.  
4        That made sense to me. I included it in my scope.  
5        Since it was in the scope it was studied in the  
6        document. It went to the hearing, and the  
7        Commission agreed and this route was adjusted to  
8        match that line, that road.

9                So that gives you an idea. 'Cause to me  
10       the hardest thing for people to bring forward is  
11       routes. It's a high bar for the public to come up  
12       with a route. But that's some examples. I hope it  
13       helps you. You have my name, my card. Give me a  
14       call as you're working through these 10 days if  
15       you're thinking about things. So the two things I'm  
16       for here tonight are give me issues and concerns and  
17       if you have alternatives you want me to look at  
18       'cause you're trying to mitigate something, I want  
19       to hear that.

20               This slide is just to tell you that I  
21       don't work in a vacuum. I work for the Department  
22       of Commerce, but there are other agencies,  
23       Department of Transportation, the DNR, the  
24       Department of Health, there are other agencies  
25       downstream who may or may not have to write permits

1       for this project if it gets a permit from the PUC.  
2       I don't work in a vacuum, I work with these  
3       agencies. And by rule these agencies, if they are  
4       downstream permits, are supposed to participate in  
5       my process. And they do, for the most part. And  
6       this is just a slide to show you that I do seek  
7       input from the Department of Ag, from the MnDOT,  
8       from the DNR. So this environmental review isn't  
9       done in a vacuum.

10               As I said, there will be downstream  
11       permits, there may be federal downstream permits  
12       with wetlands, there may be state downstream permits  
13       with public water crossings from the DNR, and  
14       accommodating road right-of-ways with MnDOT. And  
15       there may be some local, you know, road, heavy road  
16       work carrying type permits they might have to get so  
17       there are downstream permits.

18               Okay. Information on this project. As  
19       Kevin said, there's an official website, it's called  
20       eDockets, where all the official documents go. And  
21       you can find them there and you can sign up for them  
22       the way Kevin suggested you sign up for them. In  
23       addition to that, the Department of Commerce, we  
24       have our own website. It's not as technical, it's  
25       more layman laid out, so I think it explains things

1 more from a laymen's standpoint. There's an avenue  
2 on that website that you can comment to me. You can  
3 comment to me through fax, through email, through  
4 snail mail, regular mail, and you can also comment  
5 on this document on this docket, on this scope,  
6 through our website.

7 As Kevin said, you have until the end of  
8 the day on September 13th to submit your comments to  
9 me. Like I said, use mail, email, fax, our website.  
10 I've got a comment form, you can use that and just  
11 drop one off tonight if you want. I encourage you  
12 to comment. I encourage you to call me while you're  
13 working on your comments if you have something you  
14 want to go over.

15 Other than that, what I'll do now is turn  
16 it over to try to pull these comments out of you  
17 folks. And you can make a comment on an issue, you  
18 can make a comment on an alternative to me during  
19 this point, or you can ask the utility for a  
20 specific comment or question on their project. I  
21 usually have people fill out these cards, because  
22 sometimes I have four or five hundred people in the  
23 room and just to keep order. But I did get three  
24 people who signed, so I will go with these three  
25 people first, which is probably everybody, and then

1 a show of hands and we can continue on.

2 The first person is Terry. If you would  
3 stand up, Terry.

4 MR. TERRY BAKER: I'm Terry, but I'll  
5 retract my request for comment.

6 MR. BILL STORM: Okay. Scott. I'll ask  
7 you to come forward. Speak slower than I do, if you  
8 can. State and spell your name so the court  
9 reporter can get it and then give your comment, ask  
10 a question.

11 MR. SCOTT SEEGER: I'm Scott Seeger, I  
12 live in Moorhead, Minnesota, 1708 5th Street South,  
13 Moorhead, Minnesota, 56560.

14 So I'm Scott Seeger, I have property up  
15 on the -- right up on 125 -- or 115. And we were  
16 going through and talking about the different  
17 impacts.

18 When I purchased this land a few years  
19 ago from Potlatch, there was no -- nobody was  
20 talking about a transmission line. I put all my  
21 money, everything I had into my property to get my  
22 acreage that I want. It was all virgin ground,  
23 nothing out there. And now I'm being asked to take  
24 an actual financial hit on my property on my, you  
25 know, my plans of doing what I'm going to be doing



1           on that land, when there's other, clearly other  
2           routes that they can easily take.

3                       The reason why I actually spoke to  
4           Minnkota Power is because I happen to know the  
5           gentleman, I used to work with him, I watched him  
6           take his Arctic Cat and jump it in full speed up in  
7           Thief River Falls one day, but he rode it, I  
8           wouldn't do it. But Brian and I, we've worked  
9           together, and that's when he asked me, hey, can we  
10          take it a look at it? And I said, sure, but I don't  
11          want to sell. I don't want to give an easement for  
12          it. I bought the land for a reason. I bought it  
13          for timber, and power lines are not, you know, do  
14          not support timber because you got to cut the damn  
15          trees down. And I also bought it for my  
16          recreational.

17                      When they were going through there, and  
18          I've already sent mine over, my list of comments of  
19          the things where it is going to actually impact me  
20          in all my future plannings that I have laid out.  
21          Then when you start actually reading, going through  
22          their contract, which that had actually even puts me  
23          in more of a financial burden and/or a legal burden  
24          where I could actually be constrained to cross their  
25          easement to get onto my own property. That's the

1           only way I can get onto my property. Everything  
2           else is county tax forfeited all around me, so I  
3           can't go through the county tax forfeited land to  
4           get to my land.

5                       But I've said back to Brian at Minnkota  
6           Power, on the route, your clear route on this whole  
7           project. And I get the first comment that was made  
8           by this gentleman over here, was they took the route  
9           to go through to eliminate the most tree cutting.  
10          Well, you end up in Hubbard County, Clearwater  
11          County, it's all trees, you gotta take out  
12          everybody's trees. There's no not taking out trees  
13          here. I don't know where you're coming up with  
14          that.

15                      But your clearest route is you show the  
16          yellow that is shown in the transmission line as it  
17          goes through. Here's your clearest route, right  
18          there, the pipeline. The trees are already gone. I  
19          was told, well, we can't run down the pipeline  
20          because that will interfere with the negative  
21          electricity in the cathodic protection of the  
22          pipeline. Well, again, that's not my problem.  
23          That's not my problem to solve, that's the pipeline  
24          company's problem to solve, that's the power  
25          company's problem to solve. I was told that that

1        would interfere that with you, but then the  
2        electrical magnetic pole around this 115 kV line  
3        will not bother me.

4                On my particular property that I have, I  
5        was going to place within 100 feet of the roadway,  
6        it's about 75 feet of the roadway is where I have my  
7        future building plan site planned to go. I can't  
8        put my building site there now because now they want  
9        my first 100 feet of my right-of-way. Which, you  
10       know, which also takes all my trees that I planted  
11       in a buffer to help buffer me and to keep me private  
12       from my neighbors next door. And there's  
13       four-wheeler clubs that go up and down and if you  
14       don't keep your land secure, you know, people come  
15       onto your property. And I didn't buy this property  
16       for other people's use, I bought it for my and my  
17       children's use and my grandchildren's use.

18               So now talking with Bill, what was given  
19       as far as the impact to the gray wolf population up  
20       here? I got gray wolves out on my property. What's  
21       given to the aspect of having mountain lions on your  
22       property? I have camera pictures with a cougar  
23       going through my property. What about the black  
24       deer population up here? My whole property, my  
25       neighbors around me don't have the black deer that I



1 down the line here, drop down that two miles right  
2 up to the power station. The trees are already gone  
3 there. The clearing and the right-of-way for those  
4 people, it's already there. They're straddling  
5 between the houses already through there. When you  
6 come down on my side of the road it'll be my future  
7 building site. There's a hunting shack that's right  
8 up by the cemetery that also that the transmission  
9 line has to cross.

10 The other route that I sent over to Brian  
11 and stuff, and that's that there is all county tax  
12 forfeit land beside me, behind me, and to the north  
13 of me, to the east of me, and to the south of me. I  
14 mean, you look at Hubbard County, this whole county  
15 is either state or the vast majority is either state  
16 land or it's county tax forfeit land.

17 So for me, you know, I sunk everything I  
18 had into some virgin ground, I guess I don't see why  
19 I have to give up my virgin ground, and I got a  
20 little telephone line that runs out in my ditch,  
21 which I don't see, you know, it doesn't bother me.  
22 And even the pipeline, it doesn't bother me, it's in  
23 the ground, it's there.

24 Again, run the power line down that last  
25 two miles of the pipeline. It can be figured out

1       with the cathodic protection on there, how much will  
2       they have to do on their pipe to off ramp the  
3       electromagnetic field of the 115 kV line.

4               The other thing is when you put in that  
5       115 kV line, and I went online and I did research on  
6       it. Besides the noise levels that it's going to  
7       give back to me in waking up in the morning and  
8       hearing the coyotes, you know, I'm going to hear the  
9       buzz off the line if it's raining out. The other  
10      problem is I got to be 250 to 300 feet away to get  
11      back to a zero magnetic field, okay. And I took  
12      these figures off of the Internet from other power  
13      companies. It's not somebody who is out, you know,  
14      I didn't go to some tree hugger thing where they're  
15      against power companies or any group like that. I  
16      actually took the figures right from power  
17      companies.

18             If I do 350 -- or 300 feet back from the  
19      power line right-of-way, or the power line's  
20      right-of-way, that puts me right back into all my  
21      hunting area. I have, on my particular property, I  
22      have about approximately 15 to less than 20 acres of  
23      land that's flat. I mean, a flat little plateau  
24      valley just south of Lost Lake, and it's totally  
25      flat in there. I have two elevations, flat and

1 flatter. And so when I get back to my high ground,  
2 that's it. You push me back that 300 feet back into  
3 it, now my building's set, I got to be 300 feet back  
4 with my building set to be out of the way. I can't  
5 afford to go out and spend \$15,000 on a building and  
6 put it up close to that power line, and then come to  
7 find out that the electromagnetic field is going to  
8 be greater than what it should be for somebody to  
9 live there.

10 Now, Brian has offered to come out and  
11 show me that it's really not that bad. But, again,  
12 I don't have the money to take the chance of  
13 building a building that close to it and then find  
14 out it's not going to work. Or what do I do for my  
15 communications. If I come out and I put up a  
16 satellite dish to get Internet access out here in  
17 the future, is that power line going to interfere  
18 with my ability to be able to communicate with  
19 getting Internet service or a TV service?

20 And again, I sent off to Brian -- well,  
21 I've got the list right here. I've got a list of --  
22 I have 10 plus concerns that I'd sent over to  
23 Minnkota Power. And that was everything from the  
24 loss of the timber, not being -- and that being the  
25 first presentation that they gave me had no

1 compensation for the timber that I was going to  
2 lose.

3 And I'm sitting on, you know, 100 years,  
4 I've got about three generations. I have myself, my  
5 children, and my grandchildren that are already  
6 invested into this land. And now it's one of my  
7 main reasons of purchasing it, it's that after I  
8 leave that'll give them something to be able to have  
9 that financial ability to be able to log it and then  
10 replant and then enjoy everything that was given to  
11 me by my parents. And that was actually one of my  
12 father's dreams, was to have some timberland, and so  
13 after they passed away that's what I did with my  
14 resource, was to get the timberland. And I just  
15 cannot find that right now.

16 But other than that, so basically it's my  
17 concerns were the loss of the privacy barrier, the  
18 aesthetics of the power line, your noise level and  
19 site level, having to, you know, go out and  
20 everything, how it's going to look back to the road  
21 and now I can't do that because I'll have a power  
22 line. Also, the work myself and my brother have  
23 done in that area within that 100 feet, there's no  
24 compensation. And, again, I'm not looking for  
25 compensation because I do not want it. It's not



1           just because I'm trying to push it off onto somebody  
2           else.

3                       Again, there's two other easier routes.  
4           You can either go around on the tax forfeit land  
5           that's all around and behind me, on my sides or  
6           behind me, or take it right straight down the  
7           pipeline. It's for them anyway, there's no extra  
8           burden on them to run it on their land. If you got  
9           to clear trees, they'll just have to get more  
10          right-of-way on that side, 'cause that scar is  
11          already on the earth. Why put another scar on the  
12          earth where you're taking out trees where you don't  
13          have to. That's my biggest complaint. There's some  
14          other issues that I had on here, too, but just the  
15          setbacks of the building, that was the biggest thing  
16          as far as what I could do in the future with being  
17          able to develop my land the way I want to, not the  
18          way that I'm being told that I have to.

19                      Thank you.

20                      MR. BILL STORM: Thank you, Scott. Just  
21          as a follow-up Scott, noise, effects of EMF,  
22          property values, those are all, if you look in that  
23          draft scope, those are all categories I will be  
24          covering in my environmental document. What I would  
25          ask you to do, Scott, is the information you gave to

1           them, send that to me during the comment period.

2                   MR. SCOTT SEEGER: I'll have my lawyer  
3           forward it.

4                   MR. BILL STORM: Okay. The other thing  
5           I'd ask you to do, if you have two routes that you  
6           think meet the need of the utility and avoid private  
7           property, submit with your letter a drawing that  
8           says -- I mean, it doesn't have to be a high level  
9           CAD diagram, but just give me a sense of, okay,  
10          Bill, I'd like you to look at this.

11                   The way we run the process is once the  
12          10-day comment period is over and I get everybody's  
13          comments, the rules then allow the Applicant to  
14          have -- I usually give them five days to say, okay,  
15          here are all the comments I got, you're allowed now  
16          to comment on these comments. And that helps me  
17          decide what issues, what routes I think warrant  
18          being carried forward.

19                   So I would encourage you, Scott, get that  
20          information to me, draw out one or two route  
21          alternatives that you think address your issue.  
22          Make sure you tell me what your issue is, you know,  
23          in that correspondence, this is my issue, this is my  
24          concern, and I will consider it.

25                   Okay. Thank you, Scott, I really

1 appreciate that.

2 Michael. And again, state and spell your  
3 name for the court reporter and speak slower than I  
4 do, please.

5 MR. MICHAEL KATZENMEYER: My name is  
6 Michael Katzenmeyer, K-A-T-Z-E-N-M-E-Y-E-R.

7 I asked an earlier comment about the  
8 corner of 281 and Highway 200 because we have  
9 property, 40 acres, which has full frontal access on  
10 Highway 200 and on the north boundary of Itasca  
11 State Park. So our concerns with our family is the  
12 economic impact of this power line coming through  
13 there. This isn't about recommending that you take  
14 Joe's property versus our property or somebody  
15 else's, we understand that. But we wanted to make  
16 sure, first of all, that all of the tax forfeited  
17 land had been explored as an alternative route. And  
18 you made a comment earlier about the right-of-way,  
19 and we were told, Brian, I think, that it was an  
20 80-foot easement that you're looking for.

21 MR. BRIAN HOFFART: On your property.

22 MR. MICHAEL KATZENMEYER: On our  
23 property. And you said 100 --

24 MR. JAY BUSHY: No, on your property it's  
25 80.

1                   MR. MICHAEL KATZENMEYER: 80. That's a  
2                   clarifying question for us. So we would really like  
3                   you to take a look at that, because obviously there  
4                   are other people vested in this with the alternative  
5                   route. And the economic impact is serious when  
6                   you're looking at the location of our property right  
7                   on Highway 200.

8                   So thank you for any consideration that  
9                   you may give us on that.

10                  MR. BILL STORM: Okay. Michael, same as  
11                  I said to Scott, get your comments to me. If you do  
12                  have -- if you want me to consider carrying forward  
13                  an alternative route segment, draw it out for me on  
14                  a map, give me your reasons and how it alleviates  
15                  that reason. As I said, once I get all the  
16                  comments, I do give the Applicant an opportunity  
17                  to -- rebut is probably not the right word, but to  
18                  speak to those comments, and that sort of helps me  
19                  as I put together my recommendation for what should  
20                  be in the scope.

21                  That's all the cards I have. But we'll  
22                  go by a show of hands. Anybody want to speak?

23                  Okay. Ma'am, would you please come  
24                  forward, state and spell your name for the court  
25                  reporter, and again, speak slower than I do.

1 MS. MARY THOMPSON: Mary Thompson,  
2 T-H-O-M-P-S-O-N, is our spelling.

3 We own property, a very significant chunk  
4 on 281st Street. We are the only property owner  
5 that actually makes livelihood off of it, we have  
6 cattle. We have a very strong concern about this  
7 power line running anywhere through our property  
8 because of the impacts to our cattle. There are  
9 also economics with our property does go very close  
10 to the sensitive biological area. But our concerns  
11 are really about the safety of and well-being of our  
12 livelihood.

13 So we don't have an alternative route to  
14 propose. We're very sort of disgusted that all of  
15 these property owners are being asked to give up  
16 something for one company to be able to benefit  
17 from. The pipeline specifically is using this power  
18 line. Nobody else. And we have very significant  
19 concerns that we are asked to be giving up something  
20 for one company, not the public good. It is for a  
21 company to be able to pump more oil. And that is  
22 really a concern for us. And we don't have an  
23 alternative route. We don't want it here. We  
24 really think it is just not in the best interest.  
25 And so that's what I have to say.

1                   MR. BILL STORM: Thank you, Mary. Thank  
2                   you.

3                   Given Mary's comments, I'm going to add  
4                   something. What I'm here to do tonight is get  
5                   issues and alternatives that you want me to study in  
6                   the environmental report. Mary's comment brings up  
7                   an issue that I want to make sure everybody  
8                   understands so that after the environmental report  
9                   is issued, the Public Utilities Commission will be  
10                  back up here with an Administrative Law Judge to  
11                  hold a hearing. And that hearing is an opportunity  
12                  for the public to not only comment on the  
13                  environmental report I did, but also to state  
14                  positions like Mary just stated. I don't feel the  
15                  PUC should grant this permit for these reasons. It  
16                  may not have anything to do with environmental,  
17                  local environment, how it impacts you or your land,  
18                  but you may have larger issues. That's for the  
19                  hearing. That's where you want to tell the ALJ,  
20                  okay, ALJ, I looked at the record up to this point  
21                  and this is what I believe and this is why I believe  
22                  it.

23                  So I encourage you to sign up for -- with  
24                  Kevin, sign up for the project list with that orange  
25                  card for Kevin so that you make sure you get a

1 notice when we're going to get back up here for that  
2 public hearing. And I appreciate your comment and I  
3 always encourage people to vote early and often.  
4 Get your comments on the record any time there's an  
5 opportunity to. But what I'm focusing on here is  
6 the environmental review I have to do.

7 So any other -- anybody generate anything  
8 else? Seconds, if you want to come back?

9 Okay. I always do this. Going once?  
10 Twice?

11 Okay. Thank you for coming. The process  
12 only works if you participate. And as I hope the  
13 examples I showed show that you do have -- the  
14 Commission does listen, they will take your  
15 concerns, your alternatives, they will evaluate them  
16 in their decision. And you can have an effect, as  
17 is demonstrated by the examples I gave.

18 Okay. Well, have a good evening.  
19 Everybody be safe going home. You've got my contact  
20 information, please call me.

21 (Matter concluded at 7:15 p.m.)  
22  
23  
24  
25